

Con/inversion: Re-imagining discipleship with help from people called 'disabled'

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Mikhail Vrubel - The Six Winged Seraph (1905)

I said: "Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs. The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: "Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out." Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!" And he said, "Go and say to this people: 'Keep listening, but do not comprehend; keep looking, but do not understand. Make the mind of this people dull, and stop their ears, and shut their eyes, so that they may not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and comprehend with their minds, and turn and be healed.'" - Isaiah 6:1-10

Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. - 1 Corinthians 1:26-30

Conversion stories are notoriously hard to tell, as the slow transformation of the author's view of the world must be tangibly depicted. - Brian Brock, *Wondrously Wounded*

A scriptural world [can] absorb the universe. - George Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine*

We can be uplifted by the notion that the margins can also be a place of momentous power. - Grace Ji-Sun Kim, *Invisible*

Within this con/inverted discipleship paradigm, the person(s) considered 'able' are those who have the most learning and growing to do; the liminal person(s) are a bit further along in the learning and growing journey than the 'able' person(s) and they consequently act as a 'go-between' who helps connect 'able' and 'disabled' people, thereby working to collapse the gaps between the two times and spaces; and, the 'disabled' person(s) is the master discipler who trains the liminal and 'able' apprentices